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WKU English

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the phoenix

Volume 2

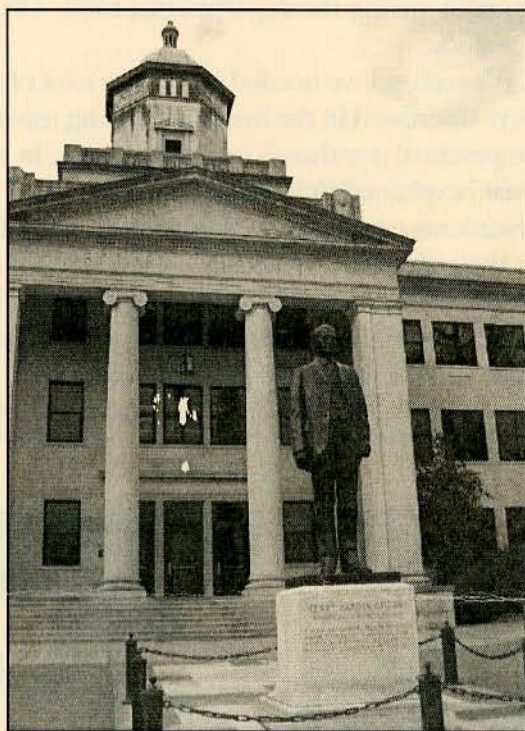
Western Kentucky University English Department

Professional writing program instituted

Cherry Hall has been a busy place these last two years. The bronze eyes of Henry Hardin have watched new faces arrive, and cherished faces depart. He's seen the accomplishments of the English Department's faculty, staff, and students as the letters of WKU have been printed alongside names in journals, papers, and publications across the nation. He's bid bon voyage to the globetrotting Study Abroad participants, and welcomed them home with open arms. He's even witnessed the restructuring of the Department's beloved Writing Program.

In Fall 2008, the English Committee voted to approve the restructuring of what was once the Writing Program into two more specialized tracks. All the same classes are being offered, but now students have the option of choosing the Creative Writing track or the Professional Writing track.

The restructuring "immediately proved
(con't pg. 2)



Study Abroad: students to Europe

Each term the WKU Study Abroad Program provides students with an opportunity to earn course credits while simultaneously exploring new cultures. Study Abroad is a way for students to not only read about a topic, but experience it firsthand. The English courses offered through the program allow students to visit the sites that inspired great works of literature. According to Dr. Walker Rutledge, the physical location helps the student to embrace those works in a way that mere study cannot.

There are two Study Abroad trips scheduled for Summer 2009 that offer upper-level literature credits for English students. Dr. Lloyd Davies

(con't pg. 2)

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(program cont.)

popular," said Department Head Karen Schneider. Already, 15 students have enrolled in the Professional Writing major, and 29 in the Creative Writing major. Thirty-nine students have remained in the general Writing major, giving the department a total of 83 writing majors.

"We realized we needed it because a lot of students were interested in the business writing aspect. It's more practical [for them]; one they can use in the work force," explained Schneider.

Students can still move between the two disciplines at their pleasure. However, a capstone course for Professional Writing is being created which will allow those students to create portfolios of their work which they could submit to potential employers.

- Chelsea Beville



English Department Faculty gather for a photograph outside Cherry Hall.

(study abroad cont.)



Above: Lake Geneva is the setting of many Romantic novels. Below: Jane Austen's house in Chawton is a popular tourist destination



will lead a course entitled Romantic Switzerland: Literature in the Alps. Students will focus on a variety of works by the British Romantics as well as some Continental authors. This is a three-week course tentatively scheduled for June 16 - July 7. Participants will not only learn about great literary works but also enjoy a tours of Lake Geneva, the Cailler Nestle chocolate factory, Castle Chillon, a hot-springs spa, and Reichenbach Falls.

Rutledge is working with the Cooperative Center for Study Abroad (CCSA) to teach a course in London, England. This is a month-long trip that will take place July 9- August 10. The title of the program is Jane Austen: Fact, Fiction, and Film and will offer three credit hours. The course will focus on Jane Austen's six novels. Highlights include visits to Bath, Austen's home in Chawton, and her burial site in Winchester. Participants will also enjoy screenings of the film renditions of Austen's works.

Students who have participated in the Study Abroad program have developed both an enhanced appreciation for literature and a greater appreciation for different cultures around the world, making them not only better students, but better people as well.

- Amy Looper

Summer writing workshops offered

When summer break rolls around, most students are thinking about heading home, getting a summer job, or hitting the beach. But for a small selection of Creative Writing students, summer turns into an opportunity to improve their craft under the direction of well-known published authors.

During the Summer of 2008, Lee Martin, author of the Pulitzer Prize finalist *The Bright Forever*, and director of the Creative Writing program at the Ohio State University, came to WKU to teach a three week long intensive workshop on fiction writing. The workshop consisted of about 20 students ranging from college-aged to middle-aged residents. Students were expected to read a variety of short stories to be discussed and analyzed in class, as well as write their own piece of fiction for workshop critiques. Students turned in a wide variety of fiction, including flash fiction, novel excerpts and short stories also ranging in topic.

This summer students will have the opportunity to study under poet Denise Duhamel. Duhamel teaches poetry at Florida International University in Miami and has published 9 books of poetry. This class will have the same workshop format as the fiction workshop. Both of these workshops offer three credit hours to students toward their degree program.

Students aren't the only ones benefiting from workshops. During winter break, Creative Writing professor Mary Ellen Miller oversees a competitive workshop that alternates between poetry and fiction each winter. During the Winter of 2008, Kentucky Poet Laureate, Jane Gentry Vance facilitated the workshop, and in Winter 2009 author Silas House helped. Several community members have participated in the workshops, but a few non-residents have also participated. The workshops last three to four days and cost \$300.

- Chelsea Beville

Faculty Achievements

The year 2008 was filled with many achievements by the WKU English Department.

Dr. Tom Hunley won the Potter College Award for Excellence in Scholarship and Creativity along with being nominated for two Pushcart Prizes (for poetry), a collaborative work that is published every year containing the best of the small press.

Professors Jeff Fearnside and Fabian Alvarez were both nominated for the Teaching Award by their students showing excellent attention to their students.

Dr. Deborah Logan delivered the keynote address at the Harriet Martineau Society in Boston and was nominated for a prestigious international award, the Colby Prize, for her 5 volume collection of H. Martineau's letters.

Dr. John Hagaman was awarded \$65,000 from the State Department of Education and \$45,000 from the Federal government for the 22nd Annual Writing Project.

Dr. Ted Hovet was awarded a Getty Library Research Grant.

Alumni, friends, and supporters of the English Department sometimes ask what they can do to help create opportunities for student learning and faculty development. Their combined financial support has made a significant difference in the quality of our department and in the lives of our students. No matter the amount, if you would like to contribute to our ongoing efforts to make ours the best English Department, please contact:

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2009 Faculty Publications

Dr. Wes Berry

"Capitalism vs. Localism: Economies of Scale in Annie Proulx's Postcards and That Old Ace in the Hole." *The Geographical Imagination of Annie Proulx: Rethinking Regionalism*. Ed. Alex Hunt. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009. 169-181.

Dr. Nikolai Endres

"Gore Vidal," *Encyclopedia of Twentieth Century American Fiction*, ed. Patrick O'Donnell, Justus Nieland, and David W. Madden (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009).

"John Addington Symonds," *British Writers*, supplement 14, ed. Jay Parini (Detroit: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2009): 249-66.

Dr. Alison Ganze

"Na Maria, pretz e fina valors': A New Argument for Female Authorship." *Romance Notes* 48 (forthcoming 2009)

Editor, *Postscript to the Middle Ages: Teaching Medieval Studies through Umberto Eco's The Name of the Rose*. Syracuse University Press (expected publication date Fall 2009)

Dr. David J. Bell

In August 2009, Bell's second novel, *The Girl in the Woods*, will be released in hardcover and trade paperback. His short story, "The Book of the Dead," will be forthcoming in *Cementary Dance*.

Dr. Lloyd Davies

"Shadowy Presences': Harold Fisch's Criticism and a Jewish Reading of Romanticism." Chapter in / *Romanticism and "The Jewish Question": Nationalism, Religion, Individualism/*. Ed. Sheila A. Spector. Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, 2009.

Alumni Achievements

Emily Schulten's manuscript "Rest in Black Haw" was published by New Plains Press. She is a doctoral candidate in poetry at Georgia State University.

Lex Sonne had work published in the most recent volume of *New Madrid*. He is in the MFA program at Columbia College in Chicago.

Melissa Messer and Emmett Barton were accepted into the JET program (English teaching assistantships in Japan).

Trish Lindsey Jagger's poem "On the Night They Took Your Life" won first prize in the New Millennium Writing Contest.

(alumni cont.)

Edric V. Thompson received the 2008 Thomas Jefferson Award for excellence in print and broadcast journalism among military and civilian employees across the Department of Defense. Thompson works in the U.S. Army Communications-Electronic Research Development and Engineering Center.

Leigh Ann Copas is the Writing Center Coordinator at Utah Valley State College.

Student Achievements

Morgan Eklund won the Sarabande Books student poetry contest, and her poem "Her Father" will be published on the Sarabande website.

Lesley Doyle's poem "Blackberry Picking" was published in the October/November issue of Mississippi Crow.

Michael O'Brien's short story "A Matter of Pride" was published in *Muscadine Lines: A Southern Journal* vol. 28.

Chelsea Beville, Sarah Durr and Corey Bewley recently published poems in *Grab-a-Nickle*.

Savannah Tankersley placed first in the Jim Wayne Miller contest for literary non-fiction.

Bobby Diegnan, Kate Darnell, Dave Christopher and Beau Spender wrote one-act plays that were recently put on at Public Theatre of Kentucky.

Charles Williamson won the Potter College Outstanding Graduate Student Award, the fifth English student to do so in the past 7 years.

R. Haynes, a Writing Project Fellow, achieved a perfect score on the Praxis exam, the highest in Kentucky.

Kimberly Reynolds won the Ray and Pat Browne Award for the best paper in popular culture studies, she will present at the national PCA/ACA conference in April.

New and Hired Faculty

The English Department at WKU has experienced a few changes in its faculty over the past year.

Dr. Russell Moore entered into transitional retirement last year. Transitional retirement is the process of moving from a full time teaching load toward full retirement. The professor takes on a lighter load of teaching classes during this process. Dr. Moore began teaching at WKU in 1969.

Dr. Elizabeth Oakes also began the transitional retirement process last year. Dr. Oakes has taught at WKU since 1987.

Dr. Ron Eckard is in his last year of transitional retirement.

WKU's English Department faculty Dr. Charmaine Mosby and Dr. Joe Glaser have com-

pleted the transitional retirement are fully retired from WKU.

The English Department said goodbye to Dr. Joe Hardin, who was the Director of Composition. Dr. Hardin takes on a position at the University of Arkansas Fort Smith.

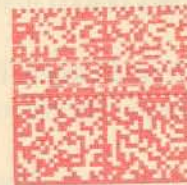
Replacing Dr. Hardin as Director of Composition is Dr. Chris Ervin. Dr. Ervin comes to us from the University of South Dakota where he is currently composition director and director the writing center. He will begin his career at WKU on July 1, 2009.

The English Department has hired Beth Weixel, who is currently finishing her Ph.D at the University of Minnesota. Weixel will be teaching Early Modern British Literature.

- Emilee Duvall



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